

MICHIGAN ORAL HISTORY ASSOCIATION



Serving those who are interested in methods and techniques of the oral history process as a means of preserving unique memory of people, places, events and ideas

National Filby Award Presented to Library of Michigan's Timothy Gleisner

The National Genealogical Society (NGS) presented the Filby Award at the Family History Conference in May to Timothy Gleisner, Head of Special Collections at the Library of Michigan, former Head of Special Collections at the Grand Rapids Public Library, and MOHA Board member.

At the Library of Michigan, Gleisner seeks to find and preserve all of the state's history and culture. At the Grand Rapids Public Library, Gleisner made available archival documents that tell the stories of that West Michigan community's past history. The Filby Award was presented to Gleisner for making significant contributions to library patron access to information and to the preservation of historical records. *(Photo courtesy of Margaret Hehr)*



Historical Society of Michigan Executive Director Larry Waggener, 2018 Charles Follo Award winner Lindsay Hiltunen, and MOHA President Jim Cameron at the annual Upper Peninsula History Conference in St. Ignace.

Lindsay Hiltunen receives Historical Society of Michigan Award

The Charles Follo Award recognizes individuals who have made outstanding contributions to the preservation and promotion of Upper Peninsula history. The 2018 Award winner is Lindsay Hiltunen, Archivist, Archives and Copper Country Historical Collections at Michigan Technological University. Hiltunen transformed the Michigan Tech University's Archives and enhanced the access, research, and outreach programs. She introduced the University's archival collections to K-12 students with school programs and activities, spearheaded projects focusing on underrepresented aspects of Upper Peninsula history, and worked with newsroom to introduce U.P. topics into stories and news features throughout the state. Hiltunen is a Board Member of MOHA.

About the Michigan Oral History Association

Mission

The mission of the Michigan Oral History Association (MOHA) is to provide effective cooperation and communication among persons, programs, and institutions concerned with the techniques, uses, and promotion of oral history in Michigan. Based on the foundation of the Michigan Oral History Council organized in 1979, the name of the non-profit corporation was changed to Michigan Oral History Association in 1994.

Who We Are

MOHA serves people interested in methods and techniques of the oral history process as a means of preserving unique memory of people, places, events and ideas. MOHA promotes and educates about oral history, as a resource for capturing on electronic media, attitudes and emotions not otherwise preserved. The pool of presenters includes experienced oral history practitioners, archivists, database managers, video producers, authors, professional transcribers, journalists and teachers. Presenters participate in history-related conference sessions, conduct workshops, and serve as facilitators for state and regional forums.

Request a Workshop! Tailored to meet the specific needs of the audience! Common topics presented: the importance of oral histories, how to organize a project, how to conduct oral histories, technology, forms to use, best practices, and archiving your oral histories. For help planning a workshop, contact Geneva Kebler Wiskemann at (517) 321-1746 or workshops@MichiganOHA.org.

Words from members about the MOHA newsletter:

"Thanks for all your efforts to help us make history meaningful to this generation and future generations."

"Thanks for this important newsletter. Much of your information and perspectives are valuable to me as I begin to digitize about 1,200 videotapes of our interviews of veterans and family members, our documentaries and archival footage."

How Can MOHA Help You?

Workshops, information, advice and resources are available to both beginning and experienced oral historians. Forums provide exchange with others who may have similar problems, obstacles, and opportunities. Established or in-progress oral history projects can benefit from MOHA's ability to promote and publicize initiatives and resources.

Become a Member!

As a member, you will receive:

- The MOHA Newsletter
- Mentoring and assistance with your oral history project
- Opportunities to participate in local and statewide conferences and workshops
- News of MOHA publications and other related resources
- Updates on oral history innovations and current projects in the state
- Opportunity to join a MOHA committee

Membership Dues:

Individual:	\$25
Institutional:	\$50
Patron:	\$50
Sponsor:	\$100
Student:	\$15

Send to: MOHA,
5580 W. State Rd., Lansing MI 48906-9325.

**Interested in getting involved in initiatives of the Michigan Oral History Association?
Contact info@michiganoha.org**

Voices of History Come Alive for High School Students

Japanese Americans Describe Their Lives in Imprisonment

Sam Mihara was nine years old when his world changed forever. After December 1941, he and his family were sentenced to mass imprisonment in a desolate Wyoming camp called Heart Mountain. In the midst of World War II, the fact that he and his brother were kids and American citizens did not matter. In a new book, The Life and Times of Sam Mihara, he shares his harrowing experiences with Japanese incarceration, and how he overcame a childhood fraught with adversity. The text includes an appendix that outlines the most important events that marked the plight of Japanese Americans during the war. The book is a narrative he shares with Alexandra Villarreal.

Mr. Mihara speaks to school groups and educators around the country (including the 2018 National Council for History Education) to tell his story. "The importance of history education cannot be overstated. Through education about the Japanese American imprisonment, we can help to ensure that such civil rights violations never happen again. The students of today have the opportunity to learn historical precedents that serve as guidelines for better solutions in the future."

The compelling presentation and narrative describe life as a young boy in the "camp" (but he states make no mistake – it was a prison with armed guards), forced removal from homes, the impact on his family members including the death of a beloved grandfather, the racial hatred he experienced, and conditions once released at age 12.

"Memories of Five Nisei; The Untold Stories of Five Former U.S. Prisoners" DVD. Second-generation Japanese Americans describe their lives before, during, and after their imprisonment in remote, desolate prison camps during World War II. This is a memorable living history of what happened during a tragic period in American history, told by people who lived and survived the ordeal. All proceeds from sales of the DVD will be forwarded to the non-profit museums at the Heart Mountain Wyoming and Topaz Utah prison sites. For more information, contact Sam Mihara: smihara12345@gmail.com and www.sammihara.com.

Latino Veterans' Voices Project

A partnership between a high school Mexican-American history class and a local arts council has produced an oral history project focusing on the voices of its community's Latino veterans. "Veteran Voices Project" is a two-year project by the San Benito County Arts Council to give voice to local veterans' stories and to engage veterans, their families and the broader community in the arts. Students learn interviewing, media, and writing skills during the course of the project. Working collaboratively, students produce written narratives that are then published on a community news site and in a recently published book archived at the local historical museum: Veteran Voices Project: Honoring the Experiences and Perspectives of Local Latino Veterans. www.sbhsd.k12.ca.us.

Frank Perez is Social Science Teacher at San Benito High School in Hollister, California. Mr. Perez stated that the project is an opportunity to work on literacy, as all students could participate, whatever their reading and literacy level. The project included historical thinking skills, local history, inclusivity, "soft skills" – interviewing someone in person and communicating. Also included in the book are the student voices, relating the interview experience to their lives.

Mr. Perez noted that Right Question Institute was helpful to start. Challenges included assessment (having to grade the students); student leadership as it was a student-run project which needed support from the teacher; sensitive topics (particularly war-time experiences and difficulties with family relationships following service), such that some parts were published anonymously; and time

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“Union Time: Fighting for Worker Rights”

October 11, 2018: Michigan State University

Our Daily Work/Our Daily Lives will host oral historian and filmmaker Matthew Barr of the Unheard Voices Project who will be showing his film “Union Time: Fighting for Worker Rights,” which chronicles the 2008 victory by North Carolina employees of the Smithfield Port Processing plant. The primarily minority workforce spent sixteen years in their fight for justice and a union at the meatpacking plant.

The film and discussion presentation will take place in two locations:

- * The daytime showing is at 2 PM at UAW Local 602, 2510 W. Michigan Avenue in Lansing.
- * The nighttime showing is at 7 PM in the Green Room on the 4th Floor West of the MSU Library (this showing is co-sponsored by the MSU Library Colloquia Series).

Both of the showings are free and open to the public. For more information, contact John P. Beck at beckj@msu.edu. You can check out the teaser for the film and other information at the Unheard Voices website: <https://www.uniontimefilm.org>

The Unheard Voices Project (UVP) is dedicated to collecting and recording the thoughts and stories of working people concerning the impact of change on their lives, their occupations, and their families: www.unheardvoicesproject.org and follow us on [Facebook](#).

The **Our Daily Work/Our Daily Lives Program** is a cooperative project that focuses on the cultural traditions of workers, workplaces as contexts for the expression of workers' culture, and the diversity of historical and artistic presentations of workers' lives.

2018 OHA Annual Meeting: October 10-14, 2018

Concordia University, Montreal, Quebec, Canada

The annual meeting attracts a broad range of people and features the best work in the field. The meeting enables students and both emerging and established scholars to network and learn valuable skills. The theme for 2018 is **Oral History in Our Challenging Times**.

Registration is open! Click [here](#) for more information.

Don't forget your passport! Information about the meeting- including where to stay, what to eat and do, and how to get there- can be found on the [website, www.oralhistory.org](http://www.oralhistory.org). *Information continued on p. 7*

***Board Officers and other Board Members
were featured in the Spring 2018 Issue.***

Tim Gleisner, Director of Archives, Michigan Library. Tim is currently the Head of Special Collections at the Library of Michigan, responsible for Government Documents, Rare Book, and Law collections of the Library. Before this, Tim was the Assistant Director of the Herrick District Library in Holland, Michigan. He was an active participant in the oral history program “Nuestra Comunidad” which sought to document the stories of the Latino community in the greater Holland area. For 12 years Tim was Head of the Reference and Special Collections Departments at the Grand Rapids Public Library. He was responsible for upkeep and transcription of oral history collections, including the Grand Rapids’ Arab-Americans, Women Leaders, LBGT, African-Americans, and many other oral history collections. In his current role, Tim is looking for ways to incorporate the practices of oral history into the Library of Michigan.

Lindsay Hiltunen, Archivist, Michigan Tech. University Archives and Copper Country Historical Collections. Lindsay is a PhD student in the Rhetoric, Theory and Culture program at Michigan Tech. She oversees collections, outreach, donors, research support services, oral history initiatives, and archival instruction at Michigan Tech’s Van Pelt and Opie Library. In addition, recent grant projects have included two oral history initiatives as well as an investigation of African-American social history in the Upper Peninsula, funded in part by the Michigan Humanities Council and winner of an award from the Historical Society of Michigan. Current board memberships include the Michigan Archival Association and Quincy Mine Hoist Association, a partner site of the Keweenaw National Historical Park. Other memberships include the National Council on Public History, Labor and Working Class History Association, and Midwest Archives Conference. She recently delivered papers at conferences including the Finnish Oral History Network’s International Oral History Symposium in Helsinki, Finland.

Jordan Karlis, Archivist, Department of Repatriation, Archives and Records, Little Traverse Bay Band (LTBB) of Odawa Indians. Jordan is an Anishinaabe-Odawa from Laurinburg, North Carolina. While she has studied and worked in archaeology and anthropology, Jordan specializes in historical research in Early American and Native American History—the Anishinaabek, in particular—with an emphasis on material culture. She is an enrolled member of the Little Traverse Bay Band of Odawa Indians as well as a recipient of the Michele Chingwa Education Assistance Scholarship. And while she has always lived in North Carolina, close to her mother’s family, Jordan felt compelled to return to her ancestral homeland and give back to her community through her education. When she applied for and was accepted to the Archivist position at LTBB, Karlis packed away her belongings and made the 1,000-mile trip to the place her ancestors called “Waganakising.”

Rick Peiffer, Sound Engineer, Michigan State University G. Robert Vincent Voice Library for 37 years. He helped develop best practices for digital re-mastering and preservation for the MSU Library’s audio collections. Oral history projects he has worked on include interview with Michigan Supreme Court Justices, the MSU Faculty Emeriti Oral History project, the National Gallery of the Spoken Word, Our Daily Work/Our Daily Lives, and the Making of Modern Michigan. Rick has been an active MOHA member for many years, recently serving as MOHA’s president 2015-2017, and will continue his efforts to promote best technical practices for oral history projects.

John L. Revitte, Michigan State University (MSU) Professor Emeritus of Work, Leisure and Labor Studies and was connected to the School of Human Resources and Labor Relations (SHRLR). During the past decade John helped coordinate a photo/oral history
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MOHA Board Members

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“building stories project” for the new Residential College in the Arts and Humanities (RCAH) and helped lead for six years the Provost’s “Meet Michigan” educational tour program highlighting MSU’s outreach to communities across Michigan. He also taught RCAH seminars on the history of Michigan workers, industries and unions and undergrad studies on work and leisure: changing definitions; sweatshops, strikes and students seeking justice at work; and the occupy/OWS movement. John co-authored and produced Detroit and Michigan labor history videos. He continues to conduct oral history/archival research projects, and writes training materials, grant proposals, articles, monographs and book and film reviews. He provides consultative service to MSU and to professional journals and associations about HR, grievance and dispute resolution issues and Michigan labor, and oral history topics, and provides interviews on history and current labor events with TV, radio and news journalists.

Karen Schauman-Beltran, Asst. Professor of Sociology and Service Learning Director, Schoolcraft College. Oral history has been a connecting force in Karen’s family, life and career. Her interest first began as a child, while spending summers with her grandmother with a first official oral history interview for an undergraduate gerontology paper. Later oral and tribal history with an elder and an oral history with her great-aunt, taught her many things about family and traditions and a presentation with the Michigan Women’s Studies Association.

She has coordinated a number of oral history projects with Detroit area activists in civil rights and anti-poverty movements. Generations of Eastern Michigan University students helped to conduct the interviews, and co-presented research at academic conferences and community-based presentations. In addition, she works with girls on an urban Indian drum group.

Melanie Shell-Weiss, Ph.D., Chair and Associate Professor, Liberal Studies Department, Grand Valley State University. Trained as a specialist in civil rights and migration history, Melanie has been a committed oral historian for nearly two decades. Her introduction to the practice of oral history came in South Africa, soon after the fall of Apartheid, when she was working for Michigan State University’s MATRIX: The Center for Digital Humanities & Social Sciences. Since then, she has worked in a wide range of places to support communities interested in documenting their own histories. This work has been highlighted in publications including two books, *Coming to Miami: A Social History* and *Florida’s Working-Class Past: Three Generations of Work in the Sunshine State*. She also directed the creation of several public archival projects and exhibitions. Recent examples include *Nuestra Comunidad Hispana* (Herrick District Library, Holland, Michigan, 2015), *Walking Beyond Our Ancestors’ Footsteps: An Urban Native American Experience* (Grand Rapids Public Library and Grand Rapids Public Museum, 2016), *Our Asian and Pacific American Community* (Herrick District Library, Holland, Michigan, 2016), *Gigikino’maage-min: Defend Our History, Unlock Your Spirit* (Grand Valley State University, 2014-present), and the National Endowment for the Humanities supported *Growing Community: Oceana County’s Agricultural History* (Grand Valley State University, Oceana County Hispanic Center, and Oceana Historical & Genealogical Society, 2016-present). She directed GVSU’s Kutsche Office of Local History from 2013-2016.

Jane Karoline Vieth, retired professor of History, Michigan State University. Jane is an oral history practitioner, former president and long-time director of MOHA, and frequent participant in state and national oral history conferences. She began work as a faculty member at MSU in 1972 in the Department of Humanities. In 1989, she joined the Department of History. She taught courses including British History, Western Civilization, Interdisciplinary approaches to Women in Western Civilization, *Continued on p. 7*

MOHA Board Members

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International Relations, and World War II. Jane served as Associate Chairperson for Undergraduate Education in History from 1990-1993 and on countless committees in History, Theatre, and Humanities. On January 1, she began a year of consultantship, and she is completing a book on the ambassadorship of Joseph P. Kennedy at the Court of St. James, 1938-1940.

William Winkel, Curatorial Assistant, Detroit Historical Society.

He serves as the Oral History Project manager at the Detroit Historical Society. He worked extensively on *Detroit 67: Looking Back to Move Forward*. In addition to serving as the Detroit '67 Oral and Written History Project manager, he was a member of the Detroit 67 exhibition research and development team. He has conducted over 150 oral histories and carried out original scholarly research on the causes, events and impacts of the events of July 1967. He contributed two essays to Wayne State University Press/Detroit Historical Society publication "Detroit 67: Origins. Impacts. Legacies."

OHA Conference, *Continued from p. 4*

The OHA will have **pre-conference workshops** on Wednesday, October 10. Blog posts are available from each of the workshop leaders.

* **Oral History & Podcasting/Radio Storytelling; Introduction to OHMS and Bilingual Indexing; Community Organizing Basics for Oral Historians; Cooking with Sound: How to Make Great Aural Histories with the Best Sonic Ingredients.**

Keynote Speakers:

"Centering Indigenous Storywork: Listening to and Learning from Stories of the Past," (Thursday)

"Between "Democracy" and "Authoritarianism": Implications for Oral History Practice," (Friday)

"The Year that Shook the World: Remembering 1968, and Learning from Stories of the Past," (Saturday)

Michigan Museum Association Conference: Theme of Leadership October 28-30, 2018

As museums continue to expand beyond their "traditional" boundaries into new communities, many wonder how to approach and connect with a new audience. The key step to understanding is listening. **Oral histories** are the perfect way for institutions to understand new audiences and provide an easy means of inclusion. The **Michigan Oral History Association** will be hosting a session at the upcoming Michigan Museums Association Conference at the Dearborn Inn. This session will examine and demonstrate how oral histories provide museums and institutions an effective way to take the lead and reach new audiences. Attendees will learn easy strategies for beginning this process. Additionally, we will explore how communication, collaboration, and representation are essential. Communities are waiting to be heard, and this session will provide the tactics and knowhow, for you to begin those conversations! Presenters are MOHA Board members William Winkel, Assistant Curator for the Detroit Historical Society, and Jim Cameron, Social Studies Consultant for the State of Michigan Department of Education.

www.michiganmuseums.org;

lcbrisson@michiganmuseums.org

Latino Veterans' Voices Project

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constraints with needing to complete interviews and written narratives before graduation.

The project is funded through the Veteran Initiative in the Arts Grant from the California Arts Council with support from Voice of Witness, San Benito High School, BenitoLink, American Legion Post 69, VFW Post 9242, and VFW Post 6359.

**Promote Your Project!
Submit newsletter or website
features, ideas, information,
and news to:
newsletter@michiganoha.org.**

MOHA Summer 2018

James Campbell Award for Best Use of Oral History, Historical Society of Michigan's 2018 Michigan History Day

The **Junior Award** went to an individual website, *Antarctic Treaty: The Compromise That Saved a Continent*, by Amelia Chen from Whitehall Middle School in Whitehall. Over the course of her research, Amelia interviewed a number of scientists whose work was impacted by the Antarctic Treaty and subsequent agreements.

Amelia used quotations from her interviews on her website to provide context and illustrate the historical consequences of the Antarctic Treaty.

The **Youth Award** went to an individual exhibit, *The Black Sox Scandal*, by Duncan Gray of Three Fires Elementary School in Howell. Duncan's project explored the impact of the Chicago "Black Sox" gambling scandal on the sport of baseball over the past century. While much of his project delved into available primary sources, Duncan also interviewed (with transcripts) college baseball players to collect stories on their experiences in baseball and explore how the scandal's legacy may have affected them.



Junior Award winner Amelia Chen with MOHA Board member Brad Jarvis

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